

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 06360

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, MNUC, TECH, AU
SUBJECT: KREISKY ON PROBLEM OF STORING AUSTRIAN IRRETREIV-
ABLE NUCLEAR WASTE

REF: VIENNA 5934

1. AT END OF MY DEBRIEFING OF CHANCELLOR KREISKY REGARDING
SUBSTANCE OF KREISKY-BRANDT-SADAT-PERES MEETINGS IN VIENNA
JULY 7-9, KREISKY RAISED WITH ME AGAIN SENSITIVE POLITICAL
ISSUE GOA FACES CONCERNING NOVEMBER 5 REFERENDUM ON NUCLEAR
POWER AND GOA EFFORTS TO RESOLVE KEY ELEMENT OF PROBLEM,
NAMELY, OF FINDING ACCEPTABLE STORAGE SITE FOR AUSTRIA'S
IRRETREIVABLE NUCLEAR WASTE. CHANCELLOR AGAIN STRESSED
POINT THAT HE WOULD APPRECIATE USG TAKING LOW PROFILE ON
GOA EFFORTS TO WORK OUT STORAGE ARRANGEMENT WITH OTHER
COUNTRIES, SINCE U.S. HAS NOT ITSELF OFFERED AUSTRIA VIABLE
SOLUTION TO AUSTRIAN PROBLEM. CHANCELLOR THEN WENT ON TO
SKETCH OUT NUMBER OF ALTERNATIVES WHICH HAVE BEEN OR ARE
BEING CONSIDERED AS FOLLDWS.

2. IRANIAN OPTION: STORAGE OF IRRETREIVABLE NUCLEAR WASTE
IN IRAN WOULD BE VERY EXPENSIVE UNDERTAKING. TO CLAIM
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THAT IRAN IS SAFER STORAGE PLACE THAN EGYPT IS QUESTION-
ABLE. HE ALSO STATED THAT ANOTHER BIG STUMBLING BLOCK TO
SUCH ARRANGEMENT IS PROBABILITY THAT ANTI-SHAH ELEMENTS
WORLDWIDE WOULD MAKE AUSTRIA TARGET OF THEIR FRUSTRATION
AND WRATH, A PROSPECT UNACCEPTABLE TO AUSTRIA FOR SECURITY
REASONS.

3. SOVIET OPTION: SECOND NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, STILL IN PROJECTION STAGE, WILL BE FUELED BY SOVIET URANIUM, WHICH IS NOT ACCOMPANIED BY RESTRICTIONS ON DISPOSAL SIMILAR TO THOSE OF U.S.-PURCHASED URANIUM FUEL. AUSTRIAN TECHNICIANS ARE NOW EXAMINING POSSIBILITY OF REPLACING U.S. URANIUM

FUEL FOR FIRST REACTOR, AS NOW PROJECTED, WITH SOVIET URANIUM. SUCH POSSIBILITY, IF REALIZED, WOULD PERMIT AUSTRIA TO GO AHEAD IN PUTTING REACTOR INTO USE AFTER WHAT EXPECTED TO BE FAVORABLE OUTCOME OF NOVEMBER REFERENDUM. (COMMENT: KREISKY DIDN'T SEEM TO IMPUTE MUCH SIGNIFICANCE TO THIS APPROACH AS A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE. END COMMENT.)

4. EGYPTIAN OPTION: TALKS WITH EGYPTIANS ON SUBJECT HAVE GONE WELL AND SADAT HAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO TAKE IRRETREIVABLE NUCLEAR WASTE. MAJOR QUESTION NOW TO BE ANSWERED IS WHETHER STORAGE OF SUCH WASTE IN EGYPT IS TECHNICALLY FEASIBLE. SINCE EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT HAS INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO SET ASIDE REGION FOR THIS PURPOSE, SUBJECT OF DEVELOPING APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO PROVIDE SAFETY OF AREA CAN NOW BE DISCUSSED. AUSTRIA IS WILLING TO PAY SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF MONEY FOR AN ARRANGEMENT WITH EGYPT. SUCH FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENT WOULD ALSO RESULT IN ADDITIONAL MUTUAL BENEFITS THROUGH EXPANDED TRADE AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION IN OTHER FIELDS. THERE IS ALSO CONFIDENTIAL

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POSSIBILITY THAT STORAGE OF IRRETREIVABLE NUCLEAR WASTE AT EGYPTIAN SITE WOULD BE OF INTEREST TO NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES, E.G., SWITZERLAND, SWEDEN, ETC. BUT THE CHANCELLOR WAS ONLY INTERESTED IN AND ARRANGING FOR THE DISPOSAL OF AUSTRIAN WASTE.

5. APPEAL TO USG: AT CLOSE OF KREISKY'S PRESENTATION OF CURRENT STATUS OF GOA EFFORT TO DEAL WITH ISSUE, CHANCELLOR REITERATED HIS APPEAL THAT USG IN EFFECT NOT COMPLICATE AUSTRIAN DOMESTIC SITUATION ON NUCLEAR POWER ISSUE BY INCAUTIOUS STATEMENTS ON MATTER. AUSTRIA IS FULLY AWARE OF ITS OBLIGATION TO DEAL WITH USG ON STORAGE AND OTHER NUCLEAR MATTERS BUT AGAIN REQUESTS THAT, UNTIL A SPECIFIC U.S. OFFER RELATING TO SOLUTION OF AUSTRIAN STORAGE PROBLEM IS FORTHCOMING, GOA NOT BE DISCOURAGED FROM PURSUING ITS OWN EFFORTS TO WORK OUT ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY EGYPT. IN THIS REGARD, CHANCELLOR STRONGLY IMPLIED THAT ANY U.S. PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS COULD EASILY ADVERSELY AFFECT OUTCOME OF NOVEMBER 5 REFERENDUM. KREISKY CONCLUDED HIS COMMENTS WITH ADMONITION THAT IF CURRENT GOA EFFORTS TO RESOLVE ISSUE FOR AUSTRIA GO AWRY, IT WILL MEAN DEFINITE END OF NUCLEAR POWER AS

VIALE ENERGY ALTERNATIVE FOR AUSTRIA. WOLF

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